

Archaeological Site Report	SiteNo	9/2/418/0010
	Site Name	Ultimatum Tree, Farm Lot 5 2612, Lower Tugela
	Date	18/11/2016 - 13:58
	Project	
	CaseNID	
	Coords	-29.216137, 31.436530
Page No: 1 SiteAutoID: 26239		

Site Category: Monuments & Memorials, Natural

Directions:

Situate on Crown Land in the County of Victoria, Province of Natal, as set out in Diagram S.G. No. 5266/49, and approved by the Surveyor-General of Natal on 25th January, 1950.

SiteComments:

Archive Import: Site where ultimatum leading to the outbreak of the Anglo-Zulu War was delivered to Zulu King Cetshwayo in 1878; the original Ficus Sonderi (Wild fig/Sycamore Fig) tree died c1992 and a sapling from the original was planted in its place. History: The ultimatum which led to the outbreak of the Anglo-Zulu War of 1879 was issued to King Cetshwayo under this tree in 1878. The 'Ultimatum Tree' stands on the right bank of the Tugela River at the site of the old pont just below Fort Pearson. In 1878 the differences between Cetshwayo and the British Governments of Natal and the Transvaal reached a climax. The main point of contention was the question of the boundary between the Transvaal and Zululand, but the real issue was the threat to Natal inherent in Cetshwayo's dangerous military strength. A boundary commission determined a boundary line between Zululand and the Transvaal that actually gave Cetshwayo more land than he was demanding and even included an area occupied by burghers of the Transvaal. In order to placate the resentment of the Transvalers the High Commissioner, Sir Bartle Frere, took up a very strong attitude towards Cetshwayo. His message conveying the decision about the border was accompanied by an ultimatum. On the morning of 11th December, 1878, the British delegation, consisting of John Wesley Shepstone, Charles Brownlee, Henry Francis Fynn and Lt.-Col. F. W. Forestier-Walker met fourteen representatives of Cetshwayo under this tree and informed them of the decision regarding the border. The discussions were resumed in the afternoon, when the ultimatum was delivered to the Zulu representatives. The ultimatum embodied a number of demands: Cetshwayo was asked to deliver up the murderers of certain Bantu women who had been kidnapped on the Natal side of the border; to pay compensation for the molesting of two White men, disband the military organisation of the Zulus; to guarantee the right of any accused person to a fair trial; to allow missionaries to return to Natal, and finally, to accept a representative of the British Government. A reply within thirty days was demanded. Cetshwayo failed to reply but merely asked for an extension of time. Thereupon the Zulu War of 1879 broke out. Proclaimed 1950 Visual Description: Ficus Sonderi (wild fig/Sycamore Fig) tree, being progeny of original historic tree; pieces of the original preserved. Colours: Site Features: Condition: Construction Date: Materials: Catalogue: , No: , Significance Category:

Damage Types: